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La Gazette de L'État de Poudouchéry

The Gazette of Puducherry

PART - I

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EXTRAORDINAIRE

EXTRAORDINARY

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GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY LAW DEPARTMENT

No. 3282/2013-LD.

Puducherry, the 17th January 2014.

NOTIFICATION

The Notification No. 218/2013, dated 20-11-2013 of the High Court of Judicature at Madras alongwith the “Gender Sensitisation and Sexual Harassment of Women at the Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/ the Union territory of Puducherry (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Regulations, 2013” is hereby published for general information of the public.

(By order)

R. ELANGOVAN,
Under Secretary to Government (Law).

HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE, MADRAS

R.O.C. No. 40/2013-Con-B2.

NOTIFICATION No. 218/2013

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the Order, dated 17-7-2013 in W.P. (C) No. 162/2013 in Binu Tamta and another *Versus* High Court of Delhi and others, while setting Comprehensive Regulations *viz.*, the Gender Sensitisation and Sexual Harassment of Women at the Supreme Court of India (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Regulations, 2013 in place, has directed that the High Courts too may formulate their own Regulations in the same manner and to ensure that the same are implemented at the district level as well.

In compliance of the said directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P. (C) No. 162/2013, the Madras High Court hereby notifies "The Gender Sensitisation and Sexual Harassment of Women at the Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/The Union territory of Puducherry (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Regulations, 2013", annexed herewith.

High Court, Madras,
Dated : 20-11-2013.

REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

**THE GENDER SENSITISATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT THE SUBORDINATE
COURTS IN THE STATE OF TAMIL NADU/THE UNION TERRITORY OF PUDUCHERRY
(PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) REGULATIONS, 2013**

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THE GENDER SENSITISATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT THE SUBORDINATE COURTS IN THE STATE OF TAMIL NADU/THE UNION TERRITORY OF PUDUCHERRY (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) REGULATIONS, 2013

Whereas, gender discrimination and sexual harassment results in violation of the fundamental right of a woman to equality under Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India and her right to life and to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution of India and right to practice any profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business which includes a right to a safe environment free from sexual harassment under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution of India;

And whereas, sensitisation against discrimination on basis of gender and the protection against sexual harassment and the right to work with dignity are universally recognised human rights by international conventions and instruments such as convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, which has been ratified on the 25th June 1993 by the Government of India;

And whereas, it is expedient to make provisions for giving effect to the Constitution of India and the said convention for protection of women against sexual harassment at the Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/The Union territory of Puducherry precincts;

And whereas, it is necessary to provide for gender sensitisation in working environment and protection against sexual harassment of women at the the Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/The Union territory of Puducherry precincts and for the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto;

And whereas, according to the decision in *Vishaka Vs. State of Rajasthan* rendered by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its judgment, dated 13th August 1997, in writ petition (Crl) No. 666-70/92 it is necessary to provide for the protection of women;

And whereas, in the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Medha Kotwal Lele Versus Union of India and others*, rendered on 19th October 2012 reported in (2013) 1 SCC 297, the necessity of protecting women from any form of indecency, indignity and disrespect in all places (in their homes as well as outside), is emphasised and it has been directed to provide new initiatives of education and advancement of women and girls in all spheres of life and the further directions given in the said judgment including the directions with regard to the need to give instructions/circulars by all statutory bodies such as the Bar Council of India, Bar Associations and State Bar Councils, and the liberty granted in the said judgment to approach the respective courts and the directions to the courts to effectively consider the grievances raised in this regard;

And whereas, in the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Binu Tamta and another Versus High Court of Delhi and others*, rendered on 17-7-2013, in W.P.(C) No.162/2013, while setting comprehensive regulations viz., the Gender Sensitisation and Sexual Harassment of Women at the Supreme Court of India (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Regulations, 2013 in place, it has been directed that the High Courts too may formulate their own Regulations in the same manner and to ensure that the same are implemented at the district level as well;

And whereas, the Madras High Court has formulated its own Regulations as directed by the Hon'ble Apex Court viz., "The Gender Sensitisation and Sexual Harassment of Women at the Madras High Court - Principal Seat at Chennai and Madurai Bench at Madurai - (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Regulations, 2013" and implemented them with effect from 25-10-2013 and there is necessity to formulate and implement such a Comprehensive Regulations in the same manner at the Subordinate Courts level in the State of Tamil Nadu and Union territory of Puducherry;

And whereas, now these Regulations are being published as a comprehensive code for prevention of sexual harassment of women within the precincts of the Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/The Union territory of Puducherry and for redressal of any complaints that may be lodged in the nearby District Courts in the districts in the State of Tamil Nadu/City Civil Court/Court of Small Causes/Office of the Administrator-General and Official Trustee of Tamil Nadu in the Chennai City/District Court, Puducherry.

The Madras High Court hereby makes the following Regulations:-

CHAPTER-I

PRELIMINARY

1. *Short title, extent and commencement.*— (1) These Regulations may be called the Gender Sensitisation and Sexual Harassment of Women at Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/The Union territory of Puducherry (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Regulations, 2013.

(2) They shall come into force on such date as the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court may, by notification issued in the name of the Registrar-General, appoint.

2. *Definitions.*— In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) "aggrieved woman" means in relation to the Subordinate Court, any female, of any age, whether employed or not, who claims to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment by any person in the Subordinate Court precincts.

(b) "Appropriate authority" in relation to the Subordinate Courts means the Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Madras, Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Madras, Administrator-General and Official Trustee of Tamil Nadu, Madras, Principal District Judge/District Judge of the District concerned and Chief Judge, Puducherry.

(c) "Chairperson" means the Chairperson of the Subordinate Court Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee (GSICC);

(d) "Chief Justice of Madras High Court" in context of the present Regulations means the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court;

(e) "Habitual Respondent" is a person against whom a previous complaint of sexual harassment has been received by the GSICC on earlier occasion, irrespective of whether the matter was resolved with or without an inquiry and except where the respondent has been exonerated in the previous complaint;

(f) "GSICC" means the Subordinate Courts-in the State of Tamil Nadu/Union territory of Puducherry- Gender Sensitization and Internal Complaints Committee constituted under Regulation 4.

(g) "Internal Sub-Committee" means the sub-committee set up under Regulation 9;

(h) "Member" means a Member of the GSICC;

(i) "Prescribed" means prescribed by the present Regulations;

(j) "Respondent" means a person against whom the aggrieved woman has made a complaint under the present Regulations;

(k) "Sexual harassment" includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication) namely:-

(i) physical contact and advances;

(ii) a demand or request for sexual favours;

(iii) making sexually coloured remarks;

(iv) showing or exhibiting pornography and/or sexually explicit material by any means;

(v) sending undesirable sexually coloured oral or written messages, text messages, e-mail messages or any such messages by electronic, manual or other means;

(vi) stalking or consistently following aggrieved woman in the Subordinate Courts precincts and outside;

(vii) voyeurism including overt or tacit observation by the respondent by any means of the aggrieved woman in her private moments;

(viii) any conduct whereby the respondent takes advantage of his position and subjects the aggrieved woman to any form of sexual harassment and seeks sexual favours specially while holding out career advancements whether explicitly or implicitly, as an incentive or a natural result of submitting to the insinuations/demands of the respondent;

(ix) any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature;

(x) implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in her legal career;

(xi) implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in her legal career;

(xii) implied or explicit threat about her present or future legal career;

(xiii) interferes with her work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment for her; or

(xiv) any treatment having a sexual colour or content likely to affect her emotional and/or physical health or safety.

(l) "The Subordinate Court precincts" means the whole premises of the Combined Court Complex/ District Court/Sub Court/Chief Judicial Magistrate Court/District Munsif Court/Judicial Magistrate Court/ District Munsif-cum-Judicial Magistrate Court including the court block, open grounds, parking, old and new chamber blocks, libraries, canteens, bar-rooms, health centres and/or any other part of the premises under the control of the respective Principal Judge, City Civil Court, Chennai/Chief Judge, Court of Small Causes, Chennai/Administrator General and Official Trustee of Tamil Nadu, Chennai/Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Egmore, Chennai/Principal District Judge/District Judge/Chief Judge, Puducherry/Subordinate Judge/Chief Judicial Magistrate/District Munsif/Judicial Magistrate/District Munsif-cum-Judicial Magistrate, but does not include the premises of the above nature occupied by other Tribunals within the court compound.

(m) "Volunteer" means Lawyers or other persons enlisted by the GSICC without any remuneration basis for carrying out the objects and purpose of these Regulations.

3. *Prevention of sexual harassment.*—No woman shall be subjected to sexual harassment at the Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/The Union territory of Puducherry precincts.

CHAPTER—II

COMPOSITION AND CONSTITUTION OF GENDER SENSITISATION AND INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

4. *Constitution of the Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee*— (1) The Subordinate Courts GSICC is constituted herein to fulfill a very important public function of sensitising the public to gender issues and to address any complaints made with regard to sexual harassment at the Subordinate Court precincts.

(2) The Appropriate Authority shall, by an order in writing, constitute a committee to be known as the "Subordinate Courts- in the State of Tamil Nadu/the Union territory of Puducherry - Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee" (GSICC) which shall consist of not less than 7 members and not more than 13 members and shall include the following as far as practicable:

(a) one or two Judicial Officers in the cadre of District Judge (Entry level) / District Judge (Selection Grade) in terms of the judgment in the case of Vishaka (Supra), one of whom shall be the Chairperson of the Committee, to be nominated by the Appropriate Authority;

(b) one or two senior members of the Bar Association with at least 20 years of membership or the Advocates Association of the respective District Court to be nominated by the respective Appropriate Authority one of whom being a woman;

(c) one or two members to be nominated by the Bar Association of the respective District Court who shall be registered member of the Bar Association for at least 10 years out of whom at least one shall be a woman;

(d) one member being a member of the Advocates / Lawyers Association of the respective District Court nominated by the Women Lawyers of that Association;

(e) one woman member being a member of the Advocates / Lawyers Clerks Association nominated by that Association;

(f) at least one and at the most two outside members to be nominated by the Appropriate Authority who are associated with the Social Welfare Department or non-government organization having experience in the field of social justice, women empowerment and/or gender justice, out of whom at least one member shall be a woman;

(g) one woman officer in the Tamil Nadu Judicial Ministerial Service / Puducherry Judicial Ministerial Service not below the rank of a Head Clerk to be nominated by the Appropriate Authority who shall function as the Member-Secretary of the GSICC; and

(h) any other member that the Appropriate Authority may deem fit to nominate:

Provided that it shall be ensured that the majority of the members of GSICC shall be woman members.

(4) The outside member appointed under clause 4(2)(f) shall be paid such fees or allowances from the allocated funds for holding the proceedings of the GSICC as may be prescribed.

(5) Where the Chairperson or any member of the GSICC -

(a) has been convicted for an offence or an inquiry into an offence under any law for the time being in force is pending against him/her;

(b) fails to constitute an internal sub-committee to inquire into a particular complaint;

(c) fails to take action under Regulation 11;

(d) contravenes or attempts to contravene or abets contravention of other provisions of these Regulations or any notifications/orders issued thereunder; or

(e) in the opinion of the Appropriate Authority has so abused his/her position as to render his/her continuance in office prejudicial to the exercise of functions of the GSICC;

such Chairperson or Member, as the case may be, shall stand removed forthwith from the GSICC by a written order of the Appropriate Authority and the vacancy so created shall be filled, by fresh nomination in accordance with the provisions of these Regulations.

5. Term of Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee members.— The term of each member of the GSICC shall be for two years, subject to the member being nominated for a maximum of two terms and a member who has been removed under Regulation 4(5) shall not be eligible for re-nomination.

6. Meetings of the Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee.— (1) The GSICC shall meet at least once in four months in a calendar year.

(2) Members shall be intimated of meetings and agenda in writing and/or by electronic communication by the Member-Secretary.

(3) Minutes of all meetings shall be recorded, confirmed and adopted. The Member-Secretary shall circulate the minutes of a meeting and the resolutions so passed to all members of the GSICC within 7 days of the holding of the meeting or the passing of the resolution.

(4) The ordinary meeting shall be called by the Chairperson with minimum seven days notice to all members.

(5) Any member of the GSICC may at any time request the Chairperson to call an emergency meeting with a notice of forty-eight hours. However, this will not prevent the Chairperson from convening an emergency meeting without 48 hours notice.

(6) The quorum for all meetings shall be one-third of the members of the GSICC. In the event the quorum is not completed for any meeting, an adjourned meeting shall be held within the next 10 days following, for which no quorum shall be required.

(7) All motions shall be carried by a simple majority of those present and voting at all meetings, except where it is specifically provided for.

Whenever a complaint is received or a report of the Internal Sub-Committee is submitted, the Member-Secretary shall within a period of 7 days request the Chairperson to call either an ordinary or emergency meeting to take action on the same and the Chairperson shall call a meeting for this purpose not later than 15 days from the date of the complaint or the report.

If a member does not attend 3 consecutive meetings without intimation to the Appropriate Authority / Chairperson of the GSICC he/she shall be liable to removal forthwith by the Appropriate Authority and the vacancy so created shall be filled in accordance with Regulation.

7. Functions of the Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee.— (1) GSICC shall be responsible for framing a policy from time to time and its implementation with regard to gender sensitisation and prevention and redressal of sexual harassment in the Subordinate Courts.

(2) Gender sensitisation and orientation: GSICC shall take the following steps with regard to gender sensitisation and orientation:

(i) GSICC will ensure the prominent publicity of the policy on gender sensitisation and prevention and redressal of sexual harassment in the Subordinate Courts in the State of Tamil Nadu/the Union territory of Puducherry in all places in the Subordinate Courts precincts such as the court building, old and new chamber blocks, library, health centre, canteens, etc.

(ii) GSICC will organize programmes for the gender sensitisation of the Subordinate Courts community through workshops, seminars, posters, film shows, debates, displays, etc.

(iii) GSICC shall submit an annual report by 31st December every year to the Chief Justice of Madras High Court which shall be made public outlining the activities undertaken by it and charting out a blueprint for the activities/steps to be taken up in the following year along with necessary budget allowances required by it. The GSICC shall include in its annual report the number of cases filed, if any, and their disposal under these Regulations in the annual report.

(iv) GSICC may enlist the help of NGO's, associations, volunteers, lawyers, lawyer's bodies or the concerned legal services authorities to carry out these programmes.

(iv) GSICC will enlist and activate an adequately representative team of volunteers and shall ensure the widespread publicity of the contact details (both official and personal) of all its members and volunteers. The services of such volunteers shall be available at all times to any aggrieved woman or any person in need of consultation or guidance. Volunteers will also assist in the gender sensitisation, crisis mediation and crises management duties of GSICC, but shall not participate in the task of formal redressal of complaints under these Regulations and Procedures.

(vi) GSICC will organise and train members and volunteers to equip them to handle sexual harassment cases including legal and medical aspects of aid.

(3) Crisis management and mediation - GSICC shall ensure that there is quick and responsive crises management, counselling and mediation available to all aggrieved women expeditiously which shall include the following activities:

(i) GSICC will assist in the mediation of crises arising out of incidents of sexual harassment at the Subordinate Court precincts.

(ii) No mediation shall conclude without approval of the GSICC, and the mediated settlement shall be effected and be enforceable only upon it being duly approved by the GSICC which shall satisfy itself that the said mediation settlement is voluntary, fair, unbiased and free from any extraneous consideration or influence.

GSICC will coordinate with the police officials in-charge of the Subordinate Courts precincts to devise ways and means by which a system of prevention of and crisis management that is both gender-sensitive as well as prompt and effective is put in place. It will maintain regular contact through the Member-Secretary with the police officials in-charge of the Subordinate Courts precincts to ensure that in crises arising out of incidents of sexual harassment, GSICC members, and/or the volunteers identified by it, shall be intimated of such incidents without delay.

(4) *Complaint redressal.*—The GSICC shall ensure that every complaint of an aggrieved woman is adequately dealt with in accordance with the established procedure and with complete sensitivity. The GSICC shall have the power to inquire into and pass orders against the respondent/deviant/delinquent in a complaint made in relation to any form of sexual harassment in the entire precincts of the Subordinate Courts.

CHAPTER - III

COMPLAINT AND INQUIRY INTO COMPLAINT

Complaint of sexual harassment.— (1) Any aggrieved woman may make a complaint in writing of sexual harassment at the Subordinate Court precincts to the GSICC through the Member-Secretary in accordance with the form and procedure so notified by it:

Provided that where the aggrieved woman is unable to make such a complaint in writing due to any reason, the member of the GSICC or volunteer, as the case may be, shall render all reasonable assistance to the woman for making the complaint in writing.

(2) Where the aggrieved woman is unable to make a complaint on account of her physical or mental incapacity or death or for any other reason, her legal heir or such other person directly concerned with her interests may make a complaint under this Regulation.

9. *Inquiry into complaint.*— (1) On receiving a complaint and upon being satisfied with regard to the genuineness of the complaint, the GSICC shall constitute an Internal Sub-Committee to conduct a fact finding inquiry, which shall comprise of three members of the GSICC itself, or such other persons as to be so nominated by the GSICC in its meeting, with majority members being women, and at least one person being an outside member:

(2) The Internal Sub-committee shall conduct an inquiry and shall hear and duly record the statements of the aggrieved woman, the respondent, and any other person the said parties wish to examine, subject to the provisions of Regulation 13(2), and thereafter it shall prepare a report and enclose therein the complete proceedings of the inquiry.

(3) The fact finding inquiry into a complaint shall be conducted and completed within 90 days of the constitution of the Internal Sub-Committee:

Provided that the validity of any inquiry shall not be called into question upon the inquiry not being completed within the stipulated period due to reasons beyond the control of the Internal Sub-Committee.

10. *Inquiry report.*— (1) On the completion of an inquiry under these Regulations, the Internal Sub-Committee shall provide the inquiry report of its findings alongwith the complete record of the inquiry proceedings including the pleadings and all the material on record to the GSICC within a period of ten days from the date of completion of the inquiry and such report shall also be made available to the concerned parties.

(2) Where the Internal Sub-Committee arrives at the conclusion that the allegation against the respondent has not been proved, it shall recommend to the GSICC that no action is required to be taken in the matter.

(3) Where the Internal Sub-Committee arrives at the conclusion that the allegation against the respondent has been proved, it shall recommend to the GSICC to take appropriate action for gender discrimination and/or sexual harassment.

(4) Upon consideration of the material on record and the inquiry report of the Internal Sub-Committee, if more than two-thirds of the members of the GSICC differ from the conclusion of the Internal Sub-Committee, the GSICC shall after hearing the aggrieved woman and respondent in person, record its reasons to so differ and take consequent action accordingly.

(5) The GSICC shall pass orders either accepting or rejecting the inquiry report of the Internal Sub-Committee and thereafter pass consequent orders that may be appropriate and necessary for putting an end to the sexual harassment and take all steps to secure justice to the victim of sexual harassment within 45 working days of submission of the inquiry report of the Internal Sub-Committee, excluding the period of holidays, and/or vacation of the Subordinate Courts:

Provided that the validity of the orders of the GSICC shall not be called into question upon the same not being passed within the stipulated time.

11. *Orders on inquiry report.*— (1) Subject to Regulation 9(1) above, the GSICC shall have the power to pass the following orders to secure justice to the victim of sexual harassment:

(a) admonition;

(b) admonition with publication of such admonition in the court precincts including cause lists and through the High Court website;

(c) prohibition from harassing the victim in any manner including, but not limited to, prohibition from communicating with her in any manner such as phones, messages, electronic means, physical or other means for a specified period; and

(d) subject to Regulation 11(2), pass all orders, directions, and/or direct taking steps necessary for putting an end to the sexual harassment of the aggrieved woman.

(2) GSICC will also have the power to recommend to the Appropriate Authority to pass orders against the respondent including, but not limited, to the following:

(a) debarment of entry into the Subordinate Court precincts for a specified period extending up to a maximum period of one year; and

(b) in appropriate cases, to recommend filing of a criminal complaint and/or a disciplinary complaint before the concerned disciplinary authority governing the respondent (including the concerned Bar Council) for taking appropriate action, and the Appropriate Authority may pass orders thereon subject to Regulation 12.

(3) The GSICC shall pass orders on the inquiry report and/or shall make recommendations to the Appropriate Authority within 45 working days of the submission of the inquiry report, excluding the period of vacation of the Subordinate Court and communicate the same to the parties forthwith.

(4) The GSICC and the Internal Sub-Committee shall have the jurisdiction to inquire into a complaint and take any action thereon notwithstanding that any criminal complaint or any other complaint under any other law (including a disciplinary proceeding under the Advocates Act, 1961) may have been filed with respect to the same complaint/actions.

(5) The orders of the Appropriate Authority and the GSICC shall be final and binding on the parties.

12. *Representation.*— (1) Any person, aggrieved by the order passed (or not passed) by the GSICC under Regulation 11(1), or recommendation made by the GSICC to the Appropriate Authority under Regulation 11(2), or non-implementation of such orders or action may make a representation to the Appropriate Authority who shall have the power to set aside or modify the orders passed or the recommendation made as the Appropriate Authority may deem fit, and also have the power to issue such orders or directions that may be necessary to secure complete justice to the victim of sexual harassment. The representation under Regulation 12(1) shall be preferred within a period of ninety days of communication of the order or recommendation.

13. *Restraint order.*— (1) On the receipt of a complaint and during the pendency of an inquiry, on a written request made by the aggrieved woman, the GSICC if it considers it fit and proper may recommend specific interim measures to be taken in a signed decision to the Appropriate Authority, who on receipt thereof may pass such interim orders that may be required for the personal safety and for safeguarding the dignity of the aggrieved woman, and both the aggrieved woman and the respondent shall be bound by the same.

(2) Upon disobedience, defiance or violation of the order passed under clause (1) above by the Respondent, the GSICC shall close and/or strike off the defence of the respondent and pass final orders under Regulation 10(5) and Regulation 11.

CHAPTER - IV

POWERS AND DUTIES

14. *Powers of GSICC and Internal Sub-Committee.*— (1) The GSICC shall have the power to issue circular/notifications prescribing its procedure and for the purpose of carrying out and implementing the provisions of the present Regulations in their spirit and intent.

(2) The GSICC shall have the power to pass any orders to be able to carry out the objectives and mandate of the present Regulations including directing any party or person to take any suitable action.

(3) For the purpose of making an inquiry, the GSICC and the Internal Sub-Committee shall have the same powers as are vested in a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 when trying a suit in respect of the following matters, namely:—

- (a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;
- (b) requiring the discovery and production of documents; and
- (c) any other matter which may be prescribed.

(4) The GSICC by resolution to be passed by two-thirds majority may remove any member of the Internal Sub-Committee and appoint a new member in his/her place, only if it is of the view that such a member has acted prejudicially to the principles of natural justice, fair play and has acted with bias in the conduct of the inquiry.

(5) The GSICC shall at all times have supervisory powers over the Internal Sub-Committee and it may issue directions to the Internal Sub-Committee from time to time in accordance with the provisions of the present Regulations.

15. *Duties.*— The GSICC in coordination with and with the assistance of the office of the Subordinate Court shall—

- (a) take measures to provide a safe working environment at the Subordinate Court precincts;
- (b) display at any conspicuous place in the Subordinate Court and on the Madras High Court website, the penal consequences of sexual harassment and the order constituting the Internal Committee under the present Regulations;
- (c) display at any conspicuous place in the Subordinate Court and on the Madras High Court website, the status and outcome of complaints of sexual harassment;
- (d) organise workshops and awareness programmes at regular intervals for sensitising the persons carrying out work at the Subordinate Court premises with the provisions of the present Regulations and orientation programmes for the members of the Internal Committee in the manner as may be prescribed;
- (e) provide necessary facilities to the Internal Sub-Committee for dealing with the complaint and conducting an inquiry;
- (f) assist in securing the attendance of respondent and witnesses before the Internal Sub-Committee;
- (g) obtain such information for the Internal Sub-Committee as it may require having regard to the complaint;
- (h) cause to initiate action, under the Indian Penal Code or any other law for the time being in force, against the respondent and/or the perpetrator;
- (i) monitor the timely submission of reports by the Internal Sub-Committee; and
- (j) take any other action and/or measures to ensure an effective and meaningful implementation of the present Regulations.

CHAPTER- V

MISCELLANEOUS

16. *Confidentiality.*— (1) The contents of the complaint made under the present Regulations, the identity and addresses of the aggrieved woman, respondent and witnesses, any information relating to the inquiry proceedings, recommendations of the GSICC and the action taken by the GSICC shall be confidential and shall not be published, communicated or made known to the public, press and media in any manner except upon the aggrieved woman submitting a specific request to do so in writing and upon the GSICC acceding to the said request.

(2) Upon the respondent being found guilty, information may be disseminated regarding the justice secured to any victim of sexual harassment under these Regulations without disclosing the name, address, identity or any other particulars calculated to lead to the identification of the aggrieved woman and witnesses.

17. *Protection of action taken in good faith.*— No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, Appropriate Authority, GSICC and the Internal Sub-Committee or its members in respect of anything which is done or intended to be done in good faith in pursuance of these Regulations, and the circulars/orders/notifications issued thereunder.

18. *Allocation of funds.*— The Appropriate Authority may, subject to the availability of financial and other resources of the Tamil Nadu State Government/Union territory of Puducherry get necessary appropriation from the respective Government through the High Court and allocate and provide suitable funds as may be prescribed.

(a) for the effective implementation of the present Regulations;

(b) for development of relevant information, education, communication and training materials, for organisation of awareness programmes, and for advancement of the understanding of the public of the provisions of these Regulations; and

(c) for organising orientation and training programmes for the members of the GSICC, Internal Sub-Committees, volunteers and counselors, etc.

19. *Regulations not in derogation of any other law.*— (1) The provisions of these Regulations shall be in addition to and not in derogation of the provisions of any other law for the time being in force.

(2) The provisions of the present Regulations shall not bar any court from taking cognizance of any offence punishable under any other enactment or law.